

Amendments to the Specification:

Please delete the paragraph on page 1, lines 4-10.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 12, line 25, with the following rewritten paragraph:

C1 If the image data are color image data, a similarity judgement can also be performed based upon one type of color information in the color image data. In such a case, a calculation scale can be decreased. Furthermore, if a similarity judgement is performed based upon two types of color information, it is possible to make an accurate judgement with regard to a color boundary at which no difference may manifest based upon one type of color information, to execute correct direction-dependent low-pass filtering processing. In other words, it becomes possible to make an accurate judgement with regard to a location at which it is difficult to judge the image structure, such as a color boundary having a uniform brightness level (uniform luminance values). In addition, noise and jaggies can be minimized while fully preserving a color boundary with a uniform ~~brightness level~~ luminance values and the like.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 21, line 4, with the following rewritten paragraph:

C2 When performing image processing on image data generated by performing color separation on reflected light originating from the object of image capturing with color filters arranged in a Bayer array, a judgment is made on the similarity manifesting in original image data constituted of color separated R, G and B pixel data (referred to as original image data), G color image data generated by using the original image data or ~~brightness image~~ luminance data generated from the original image data in the similarity judging step. In this case, in the low-pass filtering step, low-pass filtering is implemented on the G color image data generated

C2 from the original image data, R color image data generated from the original image data, B color image data generated from the original image data, the ~~brightness-image~~ luminance data generated from the original image data or color differences between individual RGB colors image data generated from the original image data, based upon the similarity ascertained in the similarity judging step.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 24, line 10, with the following rewritten paragraph:

C3 FIG. 1 is a flowchart of the operating procedure of this image processing program. The following is an explanation of the operation performed in the image processing in the first embodiment given in reference to the operating procedure shown in FIG. 1. First, the computer reads out an image file to undergo the processing, and opens and stores the image data to undergo the processing in memory (step S1). The image processing is performed on single-color image data opened in the memory in this manner. The single-color image data include image data corresponding to each color in a color image and ~~brightness-image~~ luminance image data synthesized from a plurality of colors. The computer selects a target pixel FG[i, j] to undergo the processing located at an ith row and a jth column in the image data and sets a local area ranging over approximately five rows and five columns around the target pixel (step S2). The image data to undergo the processing are image data corresponding to a plurality of pixels over n rows and m columns, and data corresponding to each pixel have a signal level referred to as a pixel value. Thus, the term "pixel level" refers to the signal level representing the pixel value. It is to be noted that the term "target pixel" does not specifically refer to an actual pixel at the image capturing element.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 50, line 14, with the following rewritten paragraph:

C4 Furthermore, while the low-pass filtering processing is implemented on the color difference data (or R or B) in the embodiment described above, the present invention is not limited to this example. Since the improvement achieved with regard to the color difference or the R or B component is normally not as pronounced as the improvement achieved in the ~~brightness~~-luminance component (G, Y), the low-pass filtering processing of the color difference data (or R or B) may be omitted. In such a case, an advantage is achieved in that the length of time required for the processing is reduced.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 50, line 25, with the following rewritten paragraph:

C5 It is to be noted that the directional low-pass filtering may be implemented on any plane. For instance, the processing may be implemented on a ~~brightness plane~~-Y plane synthesized from R, G and B.